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jury shall be done to the road by such clearing, scouring and removal, saving also all manorial rights.

13, *Resolved*, That it is the opinion of this committee, that the penalty for not removing any nuisance or obstruction within eight days after particular notice, as in the sixth resolution, shall be ten shillings, unless the penalty of one penny per foot shall exceed ten shillings.

To be Continued.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES* OF DISTINGUISHED PERSONS.

ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF THE LATE ALEXANDER GEDDES, L.L.D.

We have been induced to select for the information of our Readers, the following well written sketch. It appeared in the London Monthly Magazine in the year 1802, immediately after the Doctor's death.

DR. GEDDES was born at Arradowl, in the county of Banff, and in the parish of Ruthven, September 4, 1737, old style. His father's name was Alexander Geddes, the second of four brothers. His mother's maiden name was Janet Mitchel; she was born in Nether Dalachy, in the parish of Belay. They were respectable, but not opulent farmers; such as farmers are in that part of the country, subject to grievous oppressions from their landlords. In that station, however, they maintained an excellent reputation, and laboured incessantly to give an education to their children far above their rank. In their religious sentiments they were liberal Roman Catholics, in whose library, we are told, the principal book was an English edition of the Bible, which they taught their son to read with reverence and attention at a very early period: in his infancy, the principal facts contained in that book were familiar to his mind, and, before he had attained his eleventh year, he knew all its history by heart.*

His first schoolmistress was a Mrs. Sellar, whose distinction of him, Dr. Geddes was accustomed to say, was the earliest mental pleasure he remembered to have felt.

He was next put under the care of Mr. Shearer, a young man from Aberdeen whom the *Laird* had engaged to educate his two sons, and with whom the subject of this memoir, the late Roman Catholic Bishop Geddes, of Edinburgh, and another lad about the same age, were admitted to take lessons.

He was afterwards removed to Scalan, an obscure place of education in the Highlands, at which those young persons were brought up who had been devoted to the priesthood, and who were destined to finish their studies at a foreign university. At this seminary, we have reason to believe, young Geddes laid the foundation of that superior skill in the learned languages for which he was afterwards so eminently distinguished. In October 1758, he was sent from Scalan to the Scotch College in Paris, where he arrived about the end of December, after having narrowly escaped shipwreck in his passage from Aberdeen to Camphire. Mr. Gordon was then principal of the College. In a few days after his arrival, he began to attend the lectures in the College of Navarre, and entered immediately into Rhetoric. He soon got at the head of the class, although there were two veterans in it. Vicaire was then professor, and contracted a friendship for him, which lasted all his life.

At the beginning of the next school-year, he should have entered into a course of philosophy, but was persuaded to study philosophy at home at intervals, and to enter in divinity. He attended the lectures of MM. Buré and De Saurent at the College of Navarre, and of Ladvocat,† for

* See Dr. Geddes' general answer to queries, &c. &c. a work to which, perhaps, without being formally noticed, we shall have occasion often to refer.

† *Professeur de la Chaire D'Orleans*: a Hebrew professorship founded by Louis Duc D'Orleans, son of the Duke of

the Hebrew, at the Sorbonne. Ladvocat was particularly attentive to him, and wished much to have him remain at Paris:—but other counsels prevailed; and he returned to Scotland in the year 1764. On his arrival at Edinburgh, he was sent to Dundee, to officiate as priest to the Catholics in the county of Angus. But he did not remain long in that station; being removed in May 1765, to Traquaire, where he resided nearly three years as domestic chaplain to the Earl of Traquaire. Of this connection he was accustomed to speak with satisfaction and gratitude, as having afforded him much leisure for literary pursuits, and the use of a well furnished library, admirably adapted to assist him in his favourite studies.

He left Traquaire in the Autumn of 1768; and, after a few weeks stay in Angus, returned to Paris, where he remained the following winter; during which he was mostly in the King's and other libraries, and made several extracts from rare books, particularly Hebrew ones.

In the Spring of 1769, he returned to Britain; and undertook the charge of a considerable Roman Catholic congregation at Auchinhalrig, in Banffshire; where, in the summer of 1770 he projected and built a new chapel on the same spot where the old one stood; and soon after made the old house at Auchinhalrig one of the most neat and convenient belonging to the Roman Catholic clergy in Scotland. This, and other unavoidable expences encumbered him with debt; from which he was however relieved by the generosity of the late Duke of Norfolk. He then thought, that a little farm would help him to live more comfortably; but the consequence was quite the reverse; he was obliged to borrow money to stock it, and the failure of three successive crops plunged him deeper and deeper. Another chapel too, which he built at Fochabers, added considerably to the burthen. The publication of his Satires that year brought him in some money, but not enough. Still, however he had spirit and hopes, and he was not, in the end, disappointed. In 1779, he left Auchinhalrig; after having continued during ten years in the assiduous discharge of the various duties belonging to his pastoral office; and when he retired, it was with the most sincere and unfeigned regret of all those among whom he had ministered. The attention which he paid to the instruction of the young had never been surpassed, and but rarely equalled, by any of his predecessors.

His great learning, which began now to be universally known among the literati of the North, obtained for him, in the year 1780, a diploma, creating him Doctor of Laws, from the university of Aberdeen. This was an honour that had never, since the reformation, been conferred by that body on a Roman Catholic.

About this period Dr. Geddes came to London, and officiated for a few months as priest in the Imperial Ambassador's chapel, till it was suppressed at the end of the year 1780, by an order from the Emperor Joseph the second.

Dr. Geddes afterwards preached occasionally at the chapel in Duke-street, Lincoln's Inn fields, till Easter 1782, when it is believed he totally declined the exercise of all clerical functions.

It was at a much earlier period than this that he formed a design of giving a new translation of the whole Bible. About the year 1760 he began to read with this view: he was then acquainted with only two versions of that book, the vulgar Latin and the vulgar English; in favour of the latter he had been much prepossessed in the early part of his life; but when he had acquired a knowledge of the Latin language sufficient to enable him to compare the two translations, he gave a decided preference to the Vulgate. The English appeared to him rugged, constrained, and often obscure, where the Latin was smooth, easy, and intelligible. The former seemed to read like a translation, the latter like an original. "Such, (says Dr. Geddes) at that

Orleans, regent of France, and one of the most pious and learned princes of his age.

time was my opinion; and I confess, that whatever I have since read, has served only to confirm me in it. Let this be called prejudice; I have no objection: but, certainly, it has not been slightly formed, nor blindly followed."

In the year 1762, he began to read the originals, with these versions constantly before him, when he quickly discovered that the great object of the English translators had been to give a strictly literal version, at the expence of almost every other consideration; while the author of the Vulgate had endeavoured to render the original *equivalently*, into such language as was current in his age. Struck with the advantages of the latter method, Dr. Geddes immediately resolved to follow the same plan if he should ever translate the Bible. His original ideas, in this respect, though frequently reviewed by him, underwent but few alterations. The unwearied attention which he paid to the ancient versions in the Polyglot confirmed him in the opinion, that a strictly literal version was not the most proper to convey its meaning, and display its beauties, since even those translators, who had the text to render, not into a different language, but only into different dialects of the same language, had not attempted a strictly literal version; and that those of them who were the least literal, had the most forcibly and intelligibly rendered their text.

"But (says Dr. Geddes) when from the *ancient* I turned to modern versions, my opinion was soon strengthened into conviction. There were seven modern versions to which I had then access—the French, the Italian, the Dutch, and in Latin—those of Munster, Castalio, Junius, and Pagninus. Of these seven, the one which I opened with prejudice, was the one which I read through with the greatest pleasure.

"I had been taught to consider Castalio's translation as a profane burlesque of holy writ. What was my surprise to find, that he had seized the very spirit of the original, and transfused it into elegant Latin! I saw, indeed, and was sorry to see, that, through his excessive refinement, a part of the simplicity of his original had evaporated in the operation; and, in this respect, his version is inferior to the Vulgate: but still the spirit of the original is there; whereas, that of his contrast Pagninus appears like an almost breathless body, dragging along its limbs in the most awkward and clumsy manner; yet this Pagninus has been the general model of vernacular versions."

We have been thus particular in describing the rise of Dr. Geddes' grand work, the translation of the Bible, because it was an undertaking sufficient to immortalize any man, more particularly one who adhered to the general doctrines of a church which absolutely prohibits the use of the scriptures to the laity in their native language.

That Dr. Geddes should have had, among the members of his own church, an host of opposers, will not afford matter of astonishment to any one: he seems to have anticipated obloquy from the rich and the low vulgar, as the principal reward of an almost more than Herculean labour. But he was contented to go through evil as well as good report. He knew he had "not a mercenary soul;" the public knows, and posterity will confess, that he possessed one expanded with the best principles of liberality and disinterestedness. "I expect not (says he) excessive profits from excessive exertions. I trust I shall never want *meat*, and *cloaths*, and *fire*; to a philosophic and contented mind, what more is necessary?"

It appears that Dr. Geddes had been engaged several years in this great undertaking before he saw any prospect of meeting with encouragement sufficient to make it public, if it were completed, and ready for the press. He had, in addition to difficulties common to situations of this kind, to contend with others peculiar to himself. He had a mind ardently intense in the pursuit and investigation of truth. He could not brook error in any person, however exalted, nor would he hear it advanced and maintained, without showing the indignation of a high and noble spirit. The The sentiment contained in the pre-

face to his letter, addressed to the English Catholics, was one of the leading maxims by which his life was governed.

"At any rate, I do what I think it my duty to do, and do it fairly and openly. In the following pages, ye will find neither palliation nor disguise. I pour out my sentiments with the same sincerity as if I were before the tribunal of him, who is to judge the living and the dead. Mistake I may, but prevaricate I never will." Such a spirit shown in almost every act of his life, and in all the social intercourses and connections with the world, though meriting the applause of every honourable mind, was not the most likely to conciliate the regards of those who might have afforded him real and effectual assistance.

After he had spent much of his valuable life in biblical studies, he complains of having met with a long and cruel interruption to them, and says, "I had but little hopes of ever being in a situation to resume them, when Providence threw me into the arms of such a patron as Origen himself might have been proud to boast of—a patron, who, for these ten years past, has, with a dignity peculiar to himself, afforded me every conveniency that my heart could desire towards the carrying on and completing of my arduous work." The public are not now to be told that this liberal patron, of high and distinguished worth, and of biblical literature, was the late excellent Lord Petre. For this act of his Lordship's munificence continued through his whole life, and, by his last testament, even beyond it; christians of every denomination, will, when they know how to estimate the advantages of free inquiry, and have sufficiently imbibed the spirit of the gospel, to allow to all men the liberty they claim for themselves, feel sentiments of respect and gratitude. Happy would it have been for the christian world, if Dr. Geddes had found among Protestants another patron who should have shown the same zeal as this Catholic nobleman in promoting the general knowledge of the scriptures. In that case, we should not have had reason to lament, that we are now only in possession of the new translation of the first twelve books of the Old Testament.*

While Lord Petre's generosity secured to our author all the comforts of life, all the means necessary to proceed with his work; it was,

* It will not be thought improper to throw into a note some short account of the early encouragement which Dr. Geddes met with in this work, as stated by himself in his prospectus;—

"I cannot (says he, in his prospectus) refrain at present from mentioning two or three persons, to whom I have had particular obligations;—

"The late Dr. Kennicott (on whose tomb every biblical student ought annually to strew the tributary flower) has a peculiar claim to my grateful remembrance. I had hardly made known my design, when he anticipated my wishes to have his advice and assistance towards the execution of it, with a degree of unreserved frankness and friendship, which I had never before experienced in a stranger. Not contented with applauding and encouraging himself, he pushed me forwards from my obscurity to the notice of others: he spoke of me to Barrington; he introduced me to Lowth. The very short time he lived, after my acquaintance with him, and the few opportunities I had of profiting from his conversation, are distressing reflections; but still I count it a happiness to have been acquainted with a man, whose labours I have daily occasion to bless, and whose memory I must ever revere.

"Another person to whom, if my work have any merit, the world will stand principally indebted for it, is the Right Hon. Lord Petre, at whose request it was undertaken, and under whose patronage it is carried on. For although the plan itself is of twenty years standing, and although the author had never any thing so much at heart as its accomplishment, yet his circumstances in life were such as must have rendered that impossible, without the providential interposition of such a patron. But Lord Petre is not only the author's patron, he is in some respects the author. It was his great love for religion, and his extreme desire of seeing scriptural knowledge more generally promoted, among those of his own communion that suggested to him the idea of procuring a new translation, before he knew that I had ever entertained a similiar idea, and at a time when I almost despaired of seeing it realized."

nevertheless, inadequate to indemnify the expenses of the press. The subscribers were few in comparison of the magnitude of the undertaking; and the volumes already published were finished in a style so handsome, and even expensive, that little, or perhaps scarcely any, profit could have accrued to the author had the whole impression been sold.

In the year 1792, the first volume of this work, dedicated to his patron, Lord Petre, and containing the first six books of the Old Testament, was published. This, he informed the public, had been delayed more than a year by a combination of causes and circumstances, which he could neither foresee nor prevent; the principal of which was a long series of bad health, and a lowness of spirits which accompanied it. "A dangerous fever (says he) and its lasting consequences put a stop to the press work for a whole year. This was to be submitted to with Christian resignation; but the rubs I have received from human malignancy are a trial of patience not easily borne. Will it be readily believed, that these rubs have chiefly been raised by professed Catholics? by members of that very body which I principally meant to serve; by mine own brethren, if brethren they may be called, who *sit down and speak against their brother, and slander their own mother's son!* Ignorance, envy, and malice, in the various shapes of Monks, Friars, and Witlings, have been busy these ten years in depreciating my labours, and assassinating my reputation.*"

Soon after the publication of this volume, three *Vicars Apostolic*, who styled themselves the bishops of *Rama*, *Achantos*, and *Centuriæ*, issued a pastoral letter, addressed to their respective flocks, warning them against the reception and use of Dr. Geddes' version. This episcopal stretch of power, as Dr. Geddes conceived it to be, occasioned a correspondence between him and the bishop of Centuriæ; in the course of which the prelate, availing himself of the authority belonging to his office, declared the Doctor suspended from the exercise of his ecclesiastical functions, unless within the course of a few days he should signify his submission to an injunction contained in the pastoral letter. Little did the bishop know of Dr. Geddes' mind, if he supposed that threats could intimidate, or dread of personal danger and inconvenience could arrest him in his progress. His reply was conceived in a style highly animated,* and well

*See the address to the public, p. 1793.

* The reader will be pleased with an extract from Dr. Geddes' reply to the bishop, after he had received the sentence of suspension;—

"Perhaps, my Lord, you wish to have another occasion of exercising your episcopal authority, and of playing with censures as children do with a new ball—I wish your Lordship much joy of the bauble; but, beware, my Lord, beware of playing too often with it. Read St. Chrysostom on ecclesiastical censures, and learn from him a little more moderation. Permit an *old Priest* to tell you that it is a very great ornament in a *young, bishop*. As to myself, my Lord, I am not afraid of your threats, and shall laugh at your censures, as long as I am conscious that I deserve them not. I will never submit to the *injunction*, because I deem it a rash, ridiculous, and informal injunction. If this you think a sufficient reason for declaring me *suspended from the exercise of my orders in the London district*, much good may that declaration do you! The truth is, I exercise no pastoral function in your district: I have neither taught, preached, nor administered any sacrament in it for many years back; I have not even said prayers in any public chapel, for six years at least; to oblige a friend or two. I have, sometimes, not often, said private prayers at their houses; but since you seem to envy me the pleasure of obliging a friend, I forego that too. But, my Lord, you cannot hinder me from praying at home; and at home I will pray, in defiance of you and your censure, as often as I please. The chief bishop of our souls is always accessible; and through him I can at all times, have free access to the Father, who will not reject me, but for voluntary unrepented crimes. In the panopoly of conscious innocence, the whole thunder of the Vatican would in vain be levelled at my head.

You see, my Lord, that I have not required even the short time you grant me, to signify my disposition to submit to the injunction in your pastoral letter. Such a submission, my Lord, will never be made by ALEXANDER GEDDES,

A Priest in the Catholic Church."

adapted to the circumstances of the case. And, in a short time afterwards, he published a much longer letter to the bishop of Centuriæ, with a short preface addressed to the English Catholics; in this he says, "I trust ye will not deem it presumption in me to grapple with bishops; indeed, I would boldly grapple with Popes, if Popes dared to injure me. Our Catholic ancestors frequently grappled with them, and sometimes came off victorious. A Pope, and consequently a bishop, may do wrong, and, if he do wrong, may be told of it even by an inferior."

It was not till the year 1797, that the second volume of the translation was given to the world, which was dedicated to her Royal Highness the Dutchess of Gloucester, as an "early, spontaneous, and liberal encourager of the work." In the preface to this volume, Dr. Geddes distinctly gives up, and boldly controverts, the popular doctrine of the absolute and plenary inspiration of the scriptures; he considers the Hebrew historians to have written, like all other historians, from such human documents as they could find, consequently, like them, were liable to mistakes; that they were not more intelligent and judicious, and were equally, at least, credulous. In the scale of merit, he ranks them much lower than the more celebrated historians of Greece and Rome, because, after carefully perusing them, and properly appreciating their value, he was unable to find in the Hebrew writers that elegance, correctness, and lucid order, which were to be found in the Greeks and Romans.

"It would (says Dr. Geddes) indeed, be unfair to weigh them in the same scale. The Hebrew historians have a greater resemblance to Homer than to Herodotus, and to Herodotus than to Thucydides. To the first of these writers they in many respects bear a striking similitude. Like him, they are continually blending real facts with fanciful mythology, ascribing natural events to supernatural causes, and introducing a divine agency on every extraordinary occurrence. The same simplicity of narration, the same profusion of metaphors, the same garrulous tautology pervade them both: in both we meet with *poetical history*; the effusions of a warm imagination, tracing with boldness inaccurate resemblances between the operations of nature and the petty artifices of men."

Such was Dr. Geddes' theory as to the foundation of the Jewish scriptures, which, if generally adopted he thought would be attended with several important advantages, such as divesting the adversaries of religion of their most formidable and offensive weapons—of getting rid of a cumbersome load of useless commentators, which serve only to puzzle when they profess to explain; and biblical criticism would be reduced to one single object; namely, to ascertain the genuine grammatical meaning of a genuine text;—and of obtaining, among persons of all descriptions, a more general attention to the Hebrew scriptures.

With such notions it will be readily imagined, that our author would give up as fabulous, and totally unworthy the divine goodness, such commands, precepts, and injunctions, as should seem to his mind unworthy even of human authority. In this view of the subject he denied, that the command given to destroy the Cannanites could be of divine origin.*

In his volume of Critical Remarks, published in the year 1800, he entered

* "After all that has been written, either by Jews or Christians, in defence of this sanguinary measure, I confess that my reason and my religion continually revolt at it; and I cannot bring myself to believe that such an order proceeded from the mouth of God; perhaps not even *from the mouth of Moses.* I am rather willing to suspect that it is the fabrication of some posterior Jew to justify the cruelties of his nation. And indeed it is the shortest way to justify any measure, and to obviate all troublesome objections. Such a command could not be unjust, since God authorized and commanded it; who will presume to say that what God commands is unjust? True, but then we must be first well assured that he has commanded; and the very appearance of injustice in the act is to me a stronger proof that he did not command it, than the authority of all the Jewish historians put together." See preface to vol. II. of Dr. Geddes' translation. p. ii.

into a full vindication of his theory.* If the mention of obnoxious opinions created him an host of opponents, a justification of them was not likely to abate their fury, nor very much to diminish their number. He foresaw that, as he wrote to please no party, he must have enemies in every party. The Trinitarian, Arian, and even modern Unitarian, quickly discovered that the translator of the Bible was but a covered infidel. Some warned their respective hearers from encouraging and reading such a work, as having the worst tendency; others, though persecuted themselves for dissenting from and oppugning the popular and established dogmas, yet felt indignant that Dr. Geddes should believe so little—should concede so much. "*Can such a man be a christian?*" says one, whose own faith has a hundred times been matter of discussion by others. "If indeed," says another, he "believe enough to satisfy his own mind in calling himself a christian, yet he cannot be a Catholic." To these doubts and queries proposed to the Doctor in all shapes, and upon a thousand different occasions, he once thought it worth his while to reply.

The questions then proposed were; "Sir, are you a Roman Catholic? Sir, are you a Christian?" To the latter of these queries, I answer positively, I am a Christian. In order to give a just and *cautious* answer to the former, I must consult my old friend and countryman Duns Scotus. Now Duns Scotus instructs me (very properly) to make a distinction between the two terms; and to say: A Catholic, I am *absolute*, a *Roman* Catholic only *secundum quid*." If the querist understand Latin and Logic, he will be at no loss to comprehend my answer; but in case he should be a mere English Scholar, and for the sake of other English readers (if there be any) who may entertain any doubts about my catholicity, I will make my distinction as clear and explicit as he or they can wish. If by the epithet *Roman* be only meant holding communion with the see of Rome, and acknowledging the primacy of its bishop, I am certainly so far a Roman Catholic: but in any other sense or respect I am no more a Roman, than I am a French, German, or Spanish Catholic. If to the appellation *Catholic*, any discriminating adjunctive were necessary, I would call myself a British Catholic; but I rather adhere to the simple declaration of an ancient martyr: *Christian* is my name, and *Catholic* my surname." See Dr. Geddes' general answer to the queries, &c. &c. 1790.

In the preface to the critical remarks, he makes an explicit avowal of his faith. "The gospel of Jesus is my religious code: his doctrines are my dearest delight: his yoke to me is easy, and his burden light; but this yoke I would not put on; these doctrines I could not admire; that gospel I would not make my law, if reason, pure reason, were not my prompter and preceptress. I willingly profess myself a sincere, though unworthy, disciple of Christ: *Christian* is my name, and *Catholic* my surname. Rather than renounce these glorious titles, I would shed my blood: but I would not shed a drop of it for what is neither Catholic nor Christian. Catholic Christianity I revere wherever I find it, and in whatsoever sect it dwells: but I cannot revere the loads of hay and stubble which have been blended with its precious gems; and which still, in every sect with which I am acquainted, more or less tarnish or hide their lustre."

Such was the creed of the man who has been repeatedly calumniated and maltreated as an infidel and heretic, whose name, by many, was never mentioned without reproach. But among the truly learned, candid, and liberal of every sect, Dr. Geddes had steady friends, whose affections and regard no discordancy of opinions could alienate. Indeed it would have been strange if there had not been found many persons capable of appreciating the various excellencies

* In a little Latin poem at the end of this volume, Dr. Geddes gives an answer to the question, whether he thought Moses had been inspired. The initials at the head of these lines are generally supposed to refer to the Rev. Dr. Disney, whom Dr. Geddes used to consider, next to his patron, as his best and most intimate friend

attaching to the character of Dr. Geddes. Where virtue and science unite in the same mind; where great talents and high attainments are combined with integrity, honour, and benevolence in the intercourses of social life, with a sacred regard to truth and liberty, to the honour of God and of rational religion; whatever be the theological creed of such a person; to whatever church or communion of christians he belongs, he must claim, and will enjoy, the respect such a combination of eminent qualities will necessarily command.

In Dr. Geddes these qualities were united in a very remarkable degree; as a man of extensive learning, his various works, but especially his translation and critical notes, will afford the most ample testimony to the present and to succeeding generations. With respect to some other topics, a learned Italian declares, that he never knew out of the Papal dominions a person more deeply learned in the ecclesiastical history, canon law, the liturgy of the church, and the diplomacy of the court of Rome, than Dr. Geddes: nor does he believe that many of the higher clergy belonging to the Papal church could have rivaled him in these branches of study. The qualities of his heart were not less amiable and estimable, than his talents were transcendent. Of his integrity, honour, and benevolence, many are the living witnesses: many mourn the loss of a man, whose wit and vivacity heightened the joys of their social parties—whose good humour and pleasantry never failed to exhilarate the spirits of those about him. That he was irritable in some respects, will not be denied: but he was never malignant; never vindictive; "Never did the sun go down upon his wrath." His zeal for what he conceived to be the truth, upon all subjects, led him to a kind of eagerness in the assertion and maintenance of his opinions, which by persons ignorant of the man was sometimes mistaken for a dogmatical temper. But no one was more ready than Dr. Geddes to admit every man to the proper enjoyment of his own creed. He was in the strictest sense of the word a truly genuine Catholic; his good will extended to all of every sect and party.

His writings exhibit in a complete point of view the spirit, and ardent feelings of the man. Though many of them are monuments of profound erudition, of indefatigable study and researches; yet there are others, known by his friends to have been his composition, though without his name, which bear the marks of superior genius, sprightliness, and wit.

Besides the translation of the early books of the Bible, and the Critical Remarks we should notice, as highly deserving the attention of the biblical scholar, the prospectus of a new translation of the Bible 4to. 1786.—A letter to the bishop of London on the same subject, 1787.—His proposals came out in 1788.

In the year 1790, he published a general answer to the queries, councils, and criticisms respecting the intended translation: a work highly interesting and entertaining.

In 1793, he wrote an address to the public, on the publication of his new translation:—and in the succeeding year, his letter to, and correspondence with, the bishop of Centuriæ, were published.

As a controversialist, Dr. Geddes distinguished himself in the year 1787, by a letter to Dr. Priestley, in defence of the divinity of Jesus Christ; and by a letter to a member of Parliament, on the expediency of a general repeal of all penal statutes that regard religious opinions.

In a modest apology for the Roman Catholics of Great Britain, published in the spring of 1800, Dr. Geddes has displayed much zeal in defence of the tenets to which he adhered; great moderation when descanting upon the injuries to which himself and brethren were subject, by the continuance of persecuting laws; and sound reasoning when he argues in behalf of the justice and policy of abolishing all legal disabilities for conscience-sake.* This work deserves

* Speaking of the Catholics, in the preface to his *modest apology*, Dr. Geddes says, "if in some respects they appear unsocial, it is chiefly owing to a foreign education; which they have been long obliged to mendicate in abroad, and which gave them uncouth, uncourtly habits they

the attentive perusal of the liberal and candid of every sect. The author has taken large and comprehensive views of his subject; and has, in the discussion of it, displayed great ingenuity and acuteness—very extensive reading—great variety and depth of learning—uncommon vigour of thought and energy of diction.*

In pursuing his great work, Dr. Geddes intended next to have presented the world with a new translation of the book of psalms; but during the last whole year of his life, his studies and literary labours were greatly interrupted by a long series of painful affliction: yet in every interval of ease he applied to a work in which his heart was engaged. He had already printed in an octavo size one hundred and four of the psalms, and had prepared completely for the press as far as the one hundred and eighteenth psalm, when he was arrested by a most painful and excruciating disorder, which terminated his valuable and important life on the 26th of February, 1802.

Though in that interesting moment, "some pious drops the closing eye requires;" yet it is to be regretted that Dr. Geddes could not experience the tender charities of domestic affection, nor derive consolation from the kind and soothing attentions of any person nearly allied to him by the ties of consanguinity.

He has left one brother, who is a Monk of the order of St. Bennet, and now resides at the Scotch Monastery at Würzburg, in Franconia.

On the following Thursday, his remains, attended by a number of respectable friends* zealously attached, to Doctor Geddes during his life, were conveyed to Paddington churchyard, where they were deposited according to his own wish.

It was a subject of melancholy pleasure to behold at this parting scene, persons of different sects, and attached to the opposite prevailing political parties. Catholics and Protestants, Churchmen and Dissenters, Whigs and Torie, all forgot their differences, and united to pay a common and unfeigned respect, to the memory of one whose life had been consecrated, in a great measure, to a labour in which all are deeply interested.

We cannot better conclude this sketch than in the words of one of Dr. Geddes' very intimate friends.

"It must," (says he) "be lamented, that in the death of Dr. Geddes, the world has lost the services of a man, who by his acute and penetrating genius—his various, profound, and extensive erudition—his deep research—his indefatigable application—and his independent, dignified, and unfettered spirit, rising superior to the prejudices of education; nobly disdaining the shackles of system; spurning the petty temporizing arts of unmanly accommodation; and setting at defiance all the terrors of malignity, bigotry, and intolerance,

seldom overcame. Some vestiges of this education are still visible; but time will efface them, and has already, in a great measure, made them less apparent. Communicate to them the blessings of British freedom, admit them to a participation of British privileges, open to them the way to meritorious preferment, humble them not by special restrictions, disgrace them not by peculiar disabilities, put it in their power to blend with society in every place, and on all occasions, without marks of ignominy on their faces, and they will soon become as social as any other members of society. Their prominent features will be softened down to the common stamp; and Papist and Protestant will, in the interconrse of life, resemble one another so much, that their respective peculiarities will hardly be discernible."

* The lighter works of Dr. Geddes, both poetical and satirical, are very numerous; but as they are not identified by his name, and as he expressly desired and intreated the public not to give him credit for any publication to which his name is not affixed or prefixed, the writer of this article does not think himself justified in giving a full list of all the works generally supposed to be the Doctor's productions.

* Among these were Mr. Timothy Brown, whose steady and generous patronage during the latter years of his life always occasioned the Doctor to speak of him with the warmest emotions of gratitude, and deserves in this place a distinguished notice; also, Doctors Crombie, Calder, and Disney; Messrs. Ring, Good, Jervis, and Chalmers.

was supereminently qualified for the laborious and important work in which he had for a long series of years been engaged, of giving an English version of the venerable literary remains of sacred antiquity, the scriptures of the Old and New Testament. This was the work and the labour of his life—the object which he ever kept in view, and the pursuit from which he never deviated, but at short intervals, to relax and and unbend his mind by lighter occupations, and studies less severe; but still returning to his proper and favourite occupation with greater relish and delight. During his life, this undertaking did not meet with encouragement adequate to the magnitude of the design; or, it may be added, to the merit of the execution. In this last respect, it will be matter of surprize to all who are competent to judge of the nature of such an enterprize, how much has been done, and with what uncommon ability and success. It every where displays the skilful hand of a master. Some few exceptionable passages might perhaps be pointed out. But, is it not matter to be wondered at, that a greater number has not occurred? Had no defects appeared, then indeed the world might have seen, what it has no right to expect—what is not the privilege of human nature to produce; and what the translator never had the arrogance to propose—a perfect work. Some verbal alterations might, even in the opinion of Dr. Geddes' most ardent friends, have been made with advantage.*

But, here, so pertinent and just is the sentiment of that great master of the art of criticism, whose works he always read with delight and enthusiasm, that the application cannot be resisted:

Ubi plurima nitent——non ego paucis
Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura.

Had this great work been brought to a conclusion, with the same ability with which the venerable translator had begun it, it might justly have been considered as an honour to the country, and the glory of the age in which he lived. However it may be regarded by the narrow-minded and the illiterate, it will be the subject of lasting and sincere regret to all the enlightened friends of free inquiry—of biblical learning and sacred criticism, that the work is now left in an unfinished and imperfect state, by the death of the incomparable author. And this event must continue to be still more deeply regretted if, as there is reason to fear, the loss be irreparable; if there be no possibility of finding another person capable of carrying on the same design, and of following with equal steps in the same virtuous and honorable career, so generally competent, so highly accomplished, so variously and so amply furnished, for executing this grand desideratum of the learned and the christian world."

* The confession which the translator himself has made upon this subject, reflects great honour on the candour and liberality of his mind. Those therefore, who object, should do him the justice to examine his note on Exod, 12 11. After a learned and curious disquisition on the meaning of the term *Passover*, and remarking that it does not express the meaning of the original word, he adds, "it would have been better, perhaps, to retain the Hebrew word, as most of the ancients, and several moderns, have done;" and afterwards, "To put a short end to this controversy, let *Phasah* be restored in my Version throughout the first volume, as it has been done throughout the second, and let the reader affix to it what meaning he pleases." See critical remarks, p. 210.

DISCOVERIES AND IMPROVEMENTS IN ART'S MANUFACTURES, &c.

Patent of Mr. Thomas Mead of Sculcoates, Yorkshire, for a Rotative Steam Engine, Dated August 1808.

THE part of this engine, in which the pistons operate, consists of a hollow ring (sufficiently large to contain them in its transverse direction) in whose internal diameter is placed a hollow disk, which communicates with the cavity of the ring all round.